(b) The rate of royalty on lignite was revised from Rs. 2.50 to Rs. 50 per tonne *w.e.f.* 15.3.2001.

(c) A committee has been constituted in this Ministry to look into the matter of revision of royalty on lignite.

Production of anthracite coal

3102. SHRI S.M. LALJAN BASHA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that India produces very little of anthracite coal which we require domestically;

(b) what is the annual consumption of anthracite coal in the country;

(c) the quantity imported every year to meet internal demand;

(d) whether there is any alternative to anthracity coal; and

(e) what steps Government propose to ensure to make country self-dependent in meeting the coal needs?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COAL (DR. DASARI NARAYANA RAO): (a) Coal India Limited (CIL) and Singareni Collieries Company Limited (SCCL) do not produce any anthracite coal.

(b) and (c) Since CIL and SCCL do not produce anthracite coal indigenously, only limited consumers resort to import, in view of high cost, to meet their specific needs. The estimated annual consumption of anthracite coal ranges from 7000 to 11000 tonnes. During 2002-03, a quantity of 7597 tonnes and during 2003-04, a quantity of 10,524 tonnes of anthracite coal were imported.

(d) High grade bituminous coal may be the alternative of anthracite coal which is abundant in India.

(e) CIL has taken up the following steps to reduce the gap between demand and indigenous supply:—

99 projects have been cosisered to be taken up duing tenth Plan.

Alltoment of coal block to end users for captive mining.

Improvement in equipment utilization.

Mechanization/modernization of existing mines.

Timely implementation of projects.

All new mines are being planned with mechanization.

Gap between demand and supply of Coal

3103. SHRI EKANATH K. THAKUR: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have projected a coal shortfall of 55 million tonne against the total demand of 460.50 million tonne during the terminal year of Tenth Plan (2006-07);

(b) whether it is also a fact that the gap between the demand and indigenous supply of coal has not narrowed down inspite of 5.40 per cent growth in domestic coal production; and

(c) if so, the steps Government propose to take to reduce the mounting gap between the demand and supply of coal?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COAL (DR. DASARI NARAYANA RAO): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) No, Sir. As per midterm appraisal by Planning Commission, the projected gap of 55 million tonnes will decrease to a level of 42.5 million tonnes during the terminal year of 10th Plan (2006-07).

(c) CIL has taken up the following steps to reduce the gap between demand and indigenous supply:

(i) 99 projects have been considered to be taken up during X Plan.

(ii) Improvement in equipment utilization

(iii) Mechanization/modernization of existing mines

(iv) Timely implementation of projects

(v) All new mines are being planned with mechanization.

In addition, 46 captive coal blocks have been allotted to various end users. This would also contribute to reduction in gap between demand and supply.